

a plurality of driving mechanisms associated with the plurality of pallet carriers configured to slide each of the plurality of pallet carriers along the plurality of horizontal axes of the matrix; and

a programmable controller capable of receiving input regarding a desired payload and configured to communicate with the plurality of driving mechanisms to operably move a selected number of the plurality of pallet carriers along the plurality of horizontal axes to move a predetermined pallet carrier having the desired payload to a predetermined position.

3. (new) The system according to claim 1, wherein the matrix is disposed in a storage compartment of a naval vessel.

4. (new) The system according to claim 3, wherein the storage compartment includes holds or magazines.

5. (new) The system according to claim 1, wherein the pallet carriers are moveable between a plurality of zones within the matrix, the matrix having at least one vacant zone adapted to the size of at least one of the plurality of pallet carriers.

6. (new) The system according to claim 1, wherein the plurality of pallet carriers comprise friction reducing members.

7. (new) The system according to claim 6, wherein the friction reducing members include rollers.

8. (new) The system according to claim 1, wherein the plurality of pallet carriers are dimensioned according to predetermined standards.

9. (new) The system according to claim 8, wherein the predetermined standards include substantially rectangular shapes.

10. (new) The system according to claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of pallet carriers can substantially lock with each of the remaining of the plurality of pallet carriers, wherein two or more of the plurality of pallet carriers can support a common payload.

11. (new) The system according to claim 1, wherein the at least one payload comprises one or more of cargo or weaponry.

12. (new) The system according to claim 1, wherein the plurality of driving mechanisms comprises one or more drive belts, racks and pinions or other actuators.

13. (new) The system according to claim 12, wherein the other actuators comprise linear actuators.

14. (new) A method of stowing and retrieving a payload comprising:

positioning a first pallet carrier at a predetermined position in a matrix to load or unload at least one payload associated with the first pallet carrier, the matrix being defined by a plurality of horizontal axes, including a plurality of axes extending in a first direction and a plurality of axes extending in a second direction generally perpendicular to the first direction, the matrix comprising a plurality of pallet carriers configured to slide bi-directionally along the plurality of horizontal axes, the matrix being configured to permit the plurality of pallet carriers to move throughout the matrix; and

sliding a selected number of the plurality of pallet carriers to move a second pallet carrier to the predetermined position to load or unload at least one payload associated with the second pallet carrier.

15. (new) The method according to claim 14, wherein the pallet carriers are moveable between a plurality of zones within the matrix, the matrix having at least one vacant zone adapted to the size of at least one of the plurality of pallet carriers.

16. (new) The system according to claim 14, wherein the plurality of pallet carriers comprise friction reducing members.

17. (new) The system according to claim 16, wherein the friction reducing members include rollers.

18. (new) The method according to claim 14, wherein the plurality of pallet carriers are dimensioned according to predetermined standards.

19. (new) The method according to claim 18, wherein the predetermined standards include substantially rectangular shapes.

20. (new) The method according to claim 14, wherein the sliding of the plurality of pallet carriers is provided by a plurality of driving mechanisms associated with the plurality of pallet carriers configured to slide each of the plurality of pallet carriers along the plurality of horizontal axes of the matrix.

21. (new) The method according to claim 14, wherein the plurality of driving mechanisms comprises one or more drive belts, racks and pinions or other actuators.

Respectfully submitted,

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